

## **Rep. Cuellar Fights Against Human Trafficking**

The United States has made the global fight against human trafficking a policy priority and employs a whole-of-government approach to address all aspects of this crime. The President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (PITF) (*created by President Obama*) and the Senior Policy Operating Group (SPOG), which consists of senior officials designated as representatives of the PITF agencies, work year-round to address the many aspects of human trafficking both in the United States and around the world. The agencies of the PITF are the Departments of State (DOS), the Treasury (Treasury), Defense (DOD), Justice (DOJ), the Interior (DOI), Agriculture (USDA), Labor (DOL), Health and Human Services (HHS), Transportation (DOT), Education (ED), and Homeland Security (DHS), as well as the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR), the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), the National Security Council (NSC), the Domestic Policy Council (DPC), the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

These agencies use their resources as effectively as possible to prosecute traffickers, provide comprehensive services to victims, and prevent the crime from happening in the first place.

### **FY20 Federal Appropriations Provisions**

- **FY2020 Commerce, Justice and Science Appropriations Bill**
  - Victims of sexual assault living in rural communities are typically reluctant to report to the law enforcement for fear of being exposed. The Committee recommends the Office on Violence Against Women implement projects that reduce barriers in the reporting of crime in rural areas, colonias and persistent poverty counties and report back to the Committee within 90 days enactment of this act. (*Congressman Cuellar*)
  - **\$2,403,000,000** for Victims of Crime Act/Crime Victims Fund (*Congressman Cuellar*)
  - Human trafficking. —The Civil Rights Division shall prioritize funding for the Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit and the Department's Anti-Trafficking Coordination Teams to investigate and prosecute human traffickers. The Committee directs the Department to work with victim service providers and non-governmental organizations assisting trafficking victims in the United States.
  - Human trafficking. —The recommendation continues bill language requiring that each U.S. Attorney participate in human trafficking task forces, and the Department shall continue to submit semiannual reports on the performance of these task forces. The Committee directs the EOUSA, in consultation with the United States Attorneys, to provide sufficient support and training and technical assistance to each Assistant U.S. Attorney designated as the lead human

trafficking prosecutor, consistent with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. Designating a point of contact will improve communication and coordination within each jurisdiction, including with victim service organizations, to better serve the victims of human trafficking and forced labor. In addition, the Committee also directs the EOUSA, in consultation with the Department of Homeland Security, to develop a process to enable survivors with T-visas to obtain expedited letters of support from the Department of Justice when their criminal cases are closed.

- **FY2020 Homeland Security Appropriations Bill**
  - **Combating Human Trafficking.** —HSI plays a critical role in investigating Transnational Criminal Organizations involved in trafficking individuals into and within the United States. The Committee encourages HSI to work with appropriate nonprofit organizations and victim service providers to assist HSI agents in the identification of human trafficking victims, ensuring they receive the proper care and access to victim service organizations.
  - **Human Exploitation Rescue Operative Child-Rescue Corps.**—The recommendation includes an increase of **\$4,000,000** above the request for the training, equipping, and hiring of Human Exploitation Rescue Operative (HERO) Child-Rescue Corps program graduates. ICE is directed to brief the Committee not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act on performance indicators for the HERO program, including the number of child exploitation cases worked by HERO interns and their impact on the identification of minor victims and apprehension of contact offenders.
  - **H-2B and H-2A Visa Programs.** —The Committee directs DHS to administer the H-2B and H-2A visa programs in a manner consistent with the law and to process applications as quickly as possible. The Committee directs the Department of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Department of Labor, the Department of State, and the U.S. Digital Service, to develop options to improve processing efficiencies, combat human trafficking, protect worker rights, and reduce employer burden, and to provide a briefing of its findings and recommendations not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act.
  - **Blue Campaign.** —The recommendation includes **\$1,600,000** for Blue Campaign personnel, as requested. A department-wide initiative to combat human trafficking, the Blue Campaign, has historically been funded through end-of-year contributions from components, an approach that is inappropriate for the program's long-term sustainment. In addition to continued personnel funding, DHS is directed to account for and propose full, direct funding for program operations in the justification materials that accompany future budget submissions.

- The Committee recognizes the importance of Blue Campaign work with non-profit organizations, including those of airline personnel, to identify and report human trafficking. The Committee directs OPE to explore whether airline personnel could be better prepared to identify and protect human trafficking victims through in-person training in lieu of or in addition to the current on-line training. In addition, OPE should determine whether training efforts for airline personnel could be expanded to include the identification of individuals at risk for forced marriage abroad. Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, OPE shall update the Committee on the results of its findings.
- FY2020 Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill
  - Trafficking Awareness for Health Professionals. —The Committee encourages HRSA to identify best practices for accredited schools of medicine or nursing to train students in identifying and responding to human trafficking victims and to respond appropriately to such individuals. Best practices should be developed in consultation with law enforcement personnel, social service providers, and other experts in the field of human trafficking.
  - Victims of Trafficking - **\$28,255,000**
  - National Human Trafficking Hotline. —The recommendation includes an additional **\$1,500,000** to fund the National Human Trafficking Hotline at its authorized funding level of \$3,500,000. The Committee expects ACF to include in its fiscal year 2021 Congressional Budget Justification a line item noting enacted and requested funding levels for the Hotline.
  - The recommendation includes not less than **\$10,000,000** for the Child Advocate program, which provides support for particularly vulnerable children, including victims of abuse or trafficking, children 12 or younger, and those who are expected to remain in ORR custody for prolonged periods of time.
  - In addition to support for FBI security missions, the Committee expects the FBI will use additional resources provided to increase investigation of white-collar, fraud, and hate crimes. Increased resources are included to build on fiscal year 2019 human trafficking investigations and the squads dedicated to such efforts. The additional resources should also support deployment of resources to high-crime jurisdictions across the United States and all its territories.
  - Human trafficking investigations. —The Committee recognizes the complex nature of human trafficking investigations and includes funding to sustain and expand them, as well as associated intelligence collection, analysis, and sharing. The Director is encouraged to allocate additional resources for human trafficking cases and continue to designate a lead agent in each field office as a point of contact for slavery and human trafficking investigations. The Committee applauds

the FBI for its collaboration with Federal, State, and local partners, and hopes it will use these relationships to address human trafficking across the country.

- Human trafficking. —The Committee encourages the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) to ensure that the Transitional Housing Program can assist victims of human trafficking, and the Committee urges DOJ to take these victims into consideration when distributing OVW funds.
- Human trafficking research. —The Committee acknowledges the difficulty in estimating the prevalence of human trafficking, and the corresponding difficulty in gauging the effectiveness of the criminal justice system’s response to the problem. Research can play an invaluable role in understanding prevalence and effectiveness through improved data collection and analysis. The Committee encourages the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) to continue funding research into human trafficking.
- Victims of trafficking grants. —The recommendation includes **\$100,000,000** for human trafficking task force activities and for services for victims. These funds may also be used to develop, expand and strengthen assistance programs for child victims of sex and labor trafficking. The Committee notes that the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act established a Domestic Trafficking Victims Fund, which will provide additional resources for these programs. The Committee directs DOJ to support the victim-centered approach to recognizing and responding to human trafficking, especially across partnerships between Federal and local law enforcement agencies and victim service providers. The Committee encourages the Department to consider risk factors on a per-capita basis when making final funding decisions. The Committee encourages the Department to increase the number of human trafficking task forces funded by this program. The Department shall include a planned allocation of these funds in its spending plan.
- The Department is encouraged to support the development, refinement, and technological advancement of widely-used tools, methods, and technologies that address child sexual exploitation and trafficking.
- Preventing trafficking of girls. —The recommendation includes **\$5,000,000** for grants for nonprofits and other nongovernmental entities that have undergone rigorous evaluation and have a successful track record of administering research-based prevention and early intervention programs for girls who are vulnerable to trafficking and are most likely to end up in the juvenile justice system, at a State level. Funds shall be used to scale up and replicate these programs.
- Human trafficking intelligence. —The Committee encourages programs funded under the regional information sharing activities to hire criminal intelligence analysts to compile information, reports, and other intelligence on human trafficking into, out of, and within the borders of the United States.

**Rep. Henry Cuellar (TX-28)**  
**Vice Chair, Homeland Subcommittee on Appropriations**

**Fight Against Human Trafficking**

***Congressman Henry Cuellar (TX-28)***  
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